

the rupture that follows is nearly fatal to both the lovers. After some interval they meet again and love is not yet dead though it has fallen on evil days. Chance has made Henrietta one of the greatest heiresses in England and under pressure from her father she has become the affianced bride of Lord Montfort the heir to a dukedom. The knot gets more and more entangled till we find Ferdinand in a sponging house under arrest for debt, his engagement with his cousin, which was the mainstay of his credit, openly terminated, and his heart nearly broken by the loss of Henrietta; but when things are at their worst everything is set right by the skilful diplomacy of Count Alcibiades de Mirabel, who is D'Orsay drawn to the life and with very little pretence of concealment or disguise. Ferdinand is reunited to Henrietta, and Lord Montfort and Miss Grandison find consolation for their disappointment in an interchange of their more tranquil and accommodating affections.

The interest of the novel as a love story lies mainly in that first volume,¹ which takes its inspiration from a vivid personal experience. Some of Disraeli's critics after reading *Henrietta Temple* have contrived to pronounce the love in it affected and unreal; but it would be hard in the annals of criticism to find a more notable instance of the perverse human tendency to ignore obvious facts when they refuse to fit a theory. In the second book of the novel we have a picture of first love at the height of its spiritual ardour and intensity which only a man who had really loved himself could ever have produced. Disraeli indeed had not the simplicity of touch, which achieves the supreme lyric effect. That is the privilege of the greatest masters and of them alone; but of the essential truth and sincerity of his picture no unbiased reader can really feel a doubt.

Amid the gloom and travail of existence suddenly to behold a beautiful being, and as instantaneously to feel an overwhelming conviction that with that fair form for ever our

i Including Books I. and n. of the ordinary editions.

